(b) if so, the details thereof and the Centre's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Security considerations are taken into account while granting initial employment visa to foreigners seeking employment in India.

Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway

†1763. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any feasibility report has been prepared for Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway proposed to be undertaken under the National Highway Development Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by when it will be undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Contract for consultancy services for preparation of Feasibility Report is expected to be awarded by March, 2007.

Cost escalation of NH projects

1764. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the cost escalation of NHAI projects in 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) the break-up of such cost escalations in NHAI projects, State-wise;

(c) the action NHAI has taken to identify the reasons for cost escalation;

(d) whether it is a fact that senior officers rarely visit sites; and

(e) the steps proposed to carefully mointor all projects?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) and (b) the projects approved by the Government and entrusted to National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) under National Highways Development Project (NHDP) for upgradation are under various stages of implementation. Therefore, the cost of completion and the escalation, if any, shall be known only after the completion of the projects. The approved cost against each Phase *i.e.* Phase-I, II and IIIA is Rs. 30,300 crore (at 1999 prices), Rs. 34,339 crore (at 2002 prices) and 22,000 crore (at 2004 prices) respectively, exclusive of escalation. As against the approved cost, the actual expenditure including escalation and variations upto November, 2006 is Rs. 31,408 crore, Rs. 4,550.51 crore and Rs. 592.73 crore for NHDP Phase-I, II and IIIA respectively.

(c) The contracts awarded by NHAI have a clause relating to payment of escalation based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI).

(d) and (e) The contracts are regularly monitored at different levels including visits of senior officers at construction sites. All efforts are made to economize the construction cost.

Modernisation of Container Terminal

1765. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to improve and modernise the container terminal at Nhava Sheva;

(b) whether it is a fact that there are huge delays in delivery containers from Nhava Sheva;

(c) the reasons for the long delays at this port;

(d) whether Government have been unable to streamline operations; and

(e) the steps that would be taken to make Nhava Sheva a world-class facility?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) There are three container terminlas in operation in Jawaharlal Nehru Port, namely, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Container Terminal